

OTR Comments

on Recommendations in 1958

OCB Report on U. S. Personnel Overseas

Recommendation #1. "That all agencies strengthen their processes of selecting personnel for overseas service."

Comment: CIA has continued to improve its processes for selecting overseas candidates. OTR participates in these processes primarily through its management of the Junior Officer Training Program and through activities of its Assessment and Evaluation Staff.

JOT's, most of whom are destined for overseas service, undergo a careful process of screening, assessment, training and evaluation before receiving their assignments. The Office of Personnel, in seeking JOT candidates, makes use of standing recruitment arrangements with almost 100 colleges and universities throughout the United States. At approximately 35 of these schools, candidates are first "spotted" by special "consultants" (usually the Dean of Men or some other senior faculty member) who are familiar with the JOT Program. At the remaining schools candidates are suggested by placement officers who are generally acquainted with CIA employment standards. Still other candidates come from within CIA or from miscellaneous recruitment sources. In any case, candidates undergo a series of interviews by members of Personnel and OTR, intensive testing by the A&E Staff, and a thorough medical examination before being selected. Once in the program, they receive ten months of formal training during which they are very carefully observed and evaluated. They also get an intensive psychological assessment to aid in determining their eventual placement. All of these processes (and they include consideration of wives as well) are aimed at strengthening the selection, training, and assignment phases of our personnel program for junior officers.

In addition to its work with JOT's, the A&E Staff does intensive assessments on a sizeable number of DD/P personnel who are being considered for special operational assignments. It furnishes

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evaluation information to supervisors and career service groups, particularly with reference to persons being considered for overseas duty. And the Staff is represented on the special Personnel-Medical-Security Panel which screens nominations of staff employees for field assignments. A&E will continue to strengthen and improve its contributions to the foregoing activities, and it is establishing contact with NSA and other agencies to profit from useful developments in their overseas selection processes.

Recommendations #3 and #4. "That all agencies adopt appropriate testing techniques to identify and appraise the potential adaptability of candidates for overseas employment and, if practicable, their spouses to live overseas."

"That the testing techniques adopted be appraised after a reasonable trial period."

Comment: We believe the testing and psychological assessment methods developed by the A&E Staff to evaluate CIA personnel employ some of the most advanced techniques of their kind in use in any Government agency today. Certain portions of these procedures are especially designed to evaluate suitability for overseas service.

A&E's testing methods have been under continuous appraisal since the program began some years ago, and we believe they meet very high professional standards. However, we are anxious to develop improved ways for validating the techniques used to measure suitability for service abroad; and this aim is being actively pursued.

Recommendation #6. "That all agencies immediately reappraise and strengthen their orientation and indoctrination policies and programs both at home and abroad as follows:

- "a. Agency heads should insure that their orientation and indoctrination policies and programs provide all newly assigned personnel and their adult dependents (including contractors' employees) adequate indoctrination on their role as representative Americans.
- "b. Agency programs should provide uniform suggested standards of conduct, as well as cultural and political background and other pertinent information.

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"c. Training should be of sufficient duration and intensity to convey the importance of these matters and a basic understanding of the problems.

"d. Jointly prepared inter-agency post reports and other briefing materials should be kept current and meaningful."

Comment: a. For some time OTR has offered two special types of orientation sessions for employees and dependents preparing for overseas assignments: (1) a 6-hour general purpose Dependents' Briefing to which an additional 3-hour period on "overseas effectiveness" is being added. (2) The Americans Abroad Orientation series which is keyed to specific countries or geographic regions; sessions vary from 8 - 20 hours and are open to dependents. A special briefing is also presented for wives of JOT's when the latter enter on duty.

Beginning this September a new 80-hour course Introduction to Overseas Effectiveness will be available to professional employees who are preparing for their first overseas assignments. The course is designed to prepare them for working and living in a foreign environment. A Senior Seminar on Overseas Effectiveness is also being developed and will be offered for the first time in late fall.

Additionally, OTR is planning to add material on overseas effectiveness to all of its language and area courses and, as appropriate, to any other courses which prepare individuals for field assignments.

Bibliographies and kits of selected reading materials designed for specific orientation purposes are being developed by the Language and Area School for employees and dependents who cannot attend formal courses or who want to supplement such instruction.

b. As indicated in the preceding paragraph, increasing attention is being given to the need for employees (and their dependents) to have a full understanding of the social, cultural, political, and other factors of the area to which they will be going. To do this job properly, we need a better supply of films, "country books," reading materials and other training aids--especially for non-European countries. Hopefully, many of these materials will be developed by State and Defense in connection with their orientation programs; others will have to be obtained from commercial sources.

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c. We believe our present orientation program provides a satisfactory introduction to the problems of life abroad. The new course and seminar on Overseas Effectiveness and our program of area studies should meet requirements for more intensive training in this field.

d. An energetic effort is being made by the Language and Area School to accumulate and keep current a rapidly expanding volume of briefing materials on overseas areas. Contacts have been made with other agencies, and internally within CIA, to keep a steady flow of these materials coming in.

Recommendation #7. "That all agencies provide continuing or refresher orientation for their personnel abroad."

Comment: OTR is rapidly developing its capability to supply orientation materials [redacted] As yet, however, the Agency has no systematic plan for this purpose. It is our belief that someone should be designated at every major post abroad with responsibility for local language and area training and for the orientation of new arrivals. We would suggest the larger posts consider the type of orientation program now being conducted by the American Embassy [redacted]

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Recommendation #10. "That all agencies expand the use of joint orientation programs and facilities wherever practicable."

Comment: OTR took the lead three or four years ago with respect to this problem by organizing an interagency "round table" on language training. Representatives from CIA, Air Force, Navy, Foreign Service Institute, NEA, and USIA meet periodically to exchange materials, information regarding instructors and courses, and views with the purpose of improving instruction, avoiding competition for scarce instructors and avoiding unnecessary duplication in courses.

More recently a similar round table, with slightly different representation, has been organized to meet bimonthly to exchange and pool ideas on area training. The first such round table was held 30 June.

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OTR representatives have systematically monitored language and area courses offered by FSI and other agencies.

Recommendation #11. "That the agencies concerned with language training strengthen their facilities for such training, particularly 'at post,' and take the necessary steps to permit such training to be made available to all their U. S. employees and their adult dependents."

Comment: During the past year the Agency continued to increase its language training facilities and extend its language program. The table below indicates the number of persons who, during FY 1959, received OTR language instruction or attended classes at external facilities arranged for by OTR. In addition, many other individuals serving overseas were engaged in tutorial or other off-duty language training sponsored by their local stations.

<u>FORM OF INSTRUCTION</u>	<u>NUMBER STUDENTS</u>	<u>NUMBER LANGUAGES STUDIED</u>
On-duty training in OTR	740	19
Voluntary (off-duty) training in OTR	1,138	19
"External" duty training in U. S.	122	24
"External" duty training overseas	12	12